KINGS

AND THE

Duty of Subjects:

A

CHRISTIAN DISCOURSE

PROVING

[illegible] it is not Lawful for SUBJECTS [illegible]
[illegible]ny Ground or Pretence whatever to [illegible]
[illegible]ainst their Lawful KING.

[illegible]en by *P. Charron*, Parisian, Author of the Book of *Wisdom*.
Now Englished by *J. A.*

PROV. 24. 21.

[illegible] fear thou the Lord, and the [illegible] and meddle not with the[illegible]
[illegible] are given to change.

[illegible], a Faith, a Law, is a Trinity of State, which is so red[illegible]
[illegible] the Unity of the King, that [illegible] any defection [illegible]
[illegible] Prince, but the Authority of the Law, and the Majesty of [illegible]
[illegible] greatly impaired by it. T. or F. C.

LONDON, [illegible]
[illegible]ated for *Simon Miller* at the Star in S. *Paul's* Ch[illegible]

To the Reader.

HEnry *the third King of* France, *being a mild and peaceable Prince, and one who would not use rigour against the Protestants in his Dominions, they of the house of* Guise *took occasion thereupon to slander their King, that he was an enemy to the Roman Catholick Religion, and under the fair pretence of Religion screw'd themselves into the favour of the common people (who are usually deceived by such pretences,) raising a strong party against the King, by the name of the holy League, which caused much confusion in that Kingdom: Many sober and understanding Roman Catholicks did not like of this League; for they saw that it tended rather to the ruine than to the settlement of their Country, and that the Duke of* Guise *and the Cardinal his Brother sought their own advancing most of all, such is the nature of Ambition to look always forward and never backward. In those times and upon this occasion Mr.* P. Charon, *the Author of that learned Book of* Wisdom, *wrote this Letter of* the unlawfulness of Subjects to rise against their King, *the which because it agrees so well with the late troubles in this Kingdom of* England, *I have taken the boldness to present it to publick view: and although it was written by a Roman Catholick, yet his opinion concerning the obedience due unto Kings, is very consonant to the Doctrine of the true Christian Protestant Religion, which will be seriously considered of those who have not denied the power of godliness.* Farewel.

Ut fides, sic veritas, non à personis,
sed contrà.

Your Friend

J. R.

CHRISTIAN DISCOURSE,

PROVING,

That it is not lawful for Subjects, upon any ground, to make a League, Plot, and Rebel against their King: Being a Letter written to a Doctor of *Sorbone*, by *P. Charon*, *Parisian*.

BUt I would fain know, what you think of these times: This publick revolution, although the monstrous, horrible and bloody exploits of it were set aside, doth it not afflict us? By the grace of God as for my self, I am well enough, in regard of many others. But the wounds which my imagination receiveth and suffereth by it, are such, that what remaineth in me, is much the weaker. It seems there is no reason to be quite free from it, yet would I be hidden in some corner, for to hear nothing but when all is over, and then I wish one would tell me stories of it. Let us leave that, and come to what is of conscience. I will confess my self to you, and freely say what I think of it.

For a time I was about to turn on the League's side, and had gone half way. For in truth I was never wholly of it, nor resolute, nay their actions have exceedingly offended me. What had moved me to it was chiefly the * fact of *Blois*, which troubled me much, not for any other reason, than the defect I did find in the manner and proceeding of the execution. But this great heat of anger and indignation being [illegible] cooled, and having heard many [illegible] talk of it; consulting often within my self, what in conscience one ought to esteem and believe of this matter, in the end I found my self very much changed. For I first found doubtful, then evil, lastly horrible and abominable, what before seem'd to me not only tolerable, but good and expedient, and became to be greatly ashamed of my self, and to have pity and compassion of others, whom I saw

* *Henry* the third King of *France*, caused the Duke of *Guise*, and the Cardinal of *Lorraine*, to be put to death, who were the chief of the League.

continuing yet in my errour. And earneſtly ſeeking why I were thus aſtray, being I knew well enough before, whatſoever made me come back and recant, I found it was paſſion and fury, and that I had had ſome conceit of the League, I was always as it were in anger, in a continual feaver and agitation; whence I have learned to my coſt, that it is impoſſible to be moved and wiſe both together. The beginning of my re-adviſement came from a ſentence of good *Caſſiodorus*, who ſays; *Nullam ſatis juſtam cauſam videri poſſe, adverſus patriam arma capiendi*; one cannot find out a juſt cauſe enough, to take up Arms againſt ones Countrey; which I remembered. I will not here plead the Kings Cauſe, nor inſiſt upon the accuſation or juſtification of the King and of the League, many Pamphlets do ſpeak of all that. I have ſeen ſome of them, every where me thinks one may adde, both to the accuſations and juſtifications, ſo that in them the caſe is not entire. But I grant that all that the League ſays of the King be true (although whatſoever they alledge againſt him be either calumny, or meer impoſture, or elſe conjectures and divinations for the time to come; whereupon it ſhould not be lawful ſo much as to impeach the wretcheſt man in the world, and the baſeſt that ever was, and that one can imagine) What will we, what can we conclude of that? That it is lawful for French-men to riſe up in arms againſt him? *Per quam regulam?* by what rule that? is there any Law, rule, deciſion, example, ſentence that ſerves for it? Let us ſpeak ſeriouſly and in conſcience as before God: for I ſwear and proteſt that I have no private end. I find three points of Doctrine in the holy Scriptures, concerning this matter, to obey, or diſobey Soveraigns. *Primò*, Firſt, we have an expreſs commandement to obey Kings directed to all in general: *Omnis anima poteſtatibus ſublimioribus ſubdita ſit*; let every ſoul be ſubject unto the higher powers, *Rom.* 13. And this with two very notable additions for the time preſent. The one to obey all, as well good as bad: for in matter of obedience, the goodneſs or malice of the Superior doth not come at all into conſideration, neither ought it to haſten, or ſlacken, heat, or cool ſubjects to obey. For the commandement and obligation of obeying, ſtands upon that which is of God, to wit upon his ordinance, and not upon what is of man. *Non eſt poteſtas niſi à*

Deo,

&, & potestas à Deo ordinata est; itaque qui potestati resistit, Dei ordinationi resistit; There is no power but of God, and the power is ordained of God, therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, *Rom.* 13. In saying that all power is of God, he neither excepts, nor excludes any; saying that it is the ordinance of God, he forbiddeth us to cast down our eyes upon the merits or demerits, worth, goodness, indignity of persons. It is not reason that the defect of men should abate any thing of the attention, and ordinance of God. Besides, the examples of *Nebuchadnezzar, Saul, Cæsar*, are plain. To alledge the tyranny, wickedness, insufficiency, negligence of Kings, 'tis to say they are wicked, but it hinders them not from being true Kings. Now we ought to obey them, not because they are good, but because they are true, that is lawful; for we ought in all things to know how to distinguish between true, and good; false, and wicked. The Son of God saith indeed we should *take heed of false Prophets*, but not of wicked ones. Otherwise matters should never be at an end, we must go out of this world. On the contrary he would have us to obey the wicked, such as were the Scribes and Pharisees who were quite wicked: but because they were true and sate in the chair of *Moses*, the Son of God commands to obey them. The other addition is that obedience be given them, *Mat.* 17. not for any humane politick consideration, as for necessity, *quasi malum sit necessarium*; as if it were a necessary evil, or for the utility that comes from thence to humane society, or to avoid the troubles and misfortunes which might arise, if one would disobey or change any thing in State; but for a spiritual and conscientious consideration. *Non solùm propter iram*, not only for anger, saith S. *Paul*, *sed etiam propter conscientiam*, but also for conscience sake, *Rom.* 13. And a little before he said, *Qui resistunt, ipsi sibi damnationem acquirunt*; They that resist, do receive damnation to themselves. There is the first point which contains the commandement of obeying, most express, most general, most ample and well stored. But is this commandement so absolute that there is no exception? Is there never cause to disobey? Yes, there is: and this is the second point. The holy Scriptures teach, not to obey: but it is in a certain case only: it is when they command things contrary to God. How, say I? For

let Soveraigns live, think, ſpeak, and do what they will againſt G
nature, and all Laws; that falleth upon their own account; a ſub
is not to prie into it: it is a crime to ſpeak of it, and to detract fr
it, *Mat.* 17. *Rom.* 13, & 14. What preſumption is it, what rage,
controul, judge and condemn the actions, and deportments of h
Soveraign? it is not lawful to do it towards ones neighbour, o
companion, the Scripture forbids it; will we have more authority
and right over our King, than the King doth exerciſe over his ſub
jects? He doth not go and ſee nor ſearch into cloſets. That is wo
thy the curſe of *Cham*, and *Chanaan*, to diſcover and publiſh the na
kedneſs of ones Superiour, ones King: but when not being content
to live, do, and ſpeak, they will yet by Acts and Ordinances, by ex
preſs command and by force conſtrain their ſubjects to do things
contrary to God, then and in this caſe their ſuperiority and power
ceaſeth, which is ſubordinate to that of God, as they acknowledg it,
calling themſelves Kings by the grace of God. God is their Supe
riour, God is the firſt and ancienteſt creditor, to whom we are ra
ther obliged, and by a ſtricter obligation, whom we ought rather to
pay and ſatisfie: (neither do we obey Kings, but to obey God who
commandeth it, and hath inſtalled them:) in ſuch a caſe the word
of God diſpenſeth us from obeying them, ſaying that *we ought to
obey God rather than men*, Acts 5. And our Saviour ſaith, that
*we muſt not fear thoſe who have power on the body, and none upon the
ſoul; but him who hath power upon both*, Matth. 10. But alſo we
muſt not forget, that although they command things contrary to
God, and that in ſuch a caſe we muſt not obey them, yet they ſtill
remain true Kings, preſerve their power and authority, and that
obedience is due to them in all other things, 21. *q.* 3. *C. Julianus*.
Julian the Apoſtate perſecuting Chriſtianity, which he had made
profeſſion of, and under the title whereof he had taken poſſeſſion of
the Empire, was acknowledged true Emperour, and obeyed of the
Chriſtians in War, and all other things, except the abjuration of
their Religion, as S. *Ambroſe* and S. *Auſtin* do ſay, and Hiſtory re
lateth it enough. Neither is it to be admitted, what ſome ſay, that
the Chriſtians in thoſe days were not ſtrong enough to get into au
thority. 'Tis to be too much ignorant of Hiſtory: The Army, the
Roman Legions, yea *totus orbis Romanus*, the whole *Roman* world,
were

othen Christians. If there was yet any Heathen remaining, it was not one hundred. The principal Commanders and great Captains were Christians, was seen after his death, that without any dispute or difficulty, the Empire unanimously given to *Jovinian* a Christian, who had been a great man, and he first next to *Julian*. But what will they say of those Emperors which e afterwards, and were Hereticks, as *Valens*, *Zeno*, *Leo Isauricus*, who Arrians; *Anastasius*, an Eutychian; and others who persecuting the Catholicks, were nevertheless acknowledged Emperours, and obeyed by the Catholicks without dispute or contradiction? But it is not enough to say that must not obey them, for we must not stay here: We must know what we ght to do, and learn the right and lawful remedies in such cases, or in such remity. This is the third point. I find that the Scripture giveth us two edies, *Fugere aut pati*; I find not a third; one of these remedies is to go a- fly, leave our Country, and land. The other to suffer and endure all ngs. The Son of God hath taught us both wayes, by word and deed. *If persecute you in one City, fly into another*: *Ye are happy if ye suffer for my name*, have good men done, thus our Master. It is not reason that the servant Disciple should be better used. The third remedy is, not to fly, nor en- , or stay for the blow, but to prevail by force, to rise up in arms. Where written, let the * whole *Sorbone*, let the whole gue together shew it me, if they can. But it is ease shew the contrary. *Nebuchadnezzar* * and *Cæsar*, des that they were both Idolaters, they were not and lawful Kngs by the ordinary way, but strangers, pers, who by force of Arms had seised on, and in- ed the Country of *Israel*, Kings by fact, and not by t: yet it is commanded to obey *Nebuchadnezzar*. in *Jer.* 27. all those are called false Prophets, *that persuade the people not to obey him*. And it is com- ded by our Saviour *to give unto Cæsar what is his*. And S. *Paul* appealed unto r, which was *Nero*, the wickedest and wretchedest that ever was born of a man. All that is far from rebelling. The aforesaid examples of *Julian* the A- te, and other heretick Emperours do also shew well enough the contrary. lawful not to obey, and this in a certain case only; but to rebel and use and violence, never. Between not obeying, and fighting against, there vast distance, as between omission, and commission, between the child that eyeth not his Father, who commandeth him to kill his Mother; and the child will cut his Fathers throat, and doth persecute him to the uttermost. O cency of the Gospel! O purity of the Christian Doctrine! which giveth us od and sweet a qualification in such pressing and desperate extremities, so means, that all is safe without violence, which is so contrary to Christian y and meekness. There is no contrariety of Laws in the Gospel. The

Commandements

* *Sorbone* is a Colledge of Divines in *Paris*: hence the Doctors of *Sorbone*.

* The League was the *Guisian* faction, who under pretence of maintaining the *Roman* Catholick Religion, undermined the Kings authority, and sought to advance themselves.

Commandements of obeying God, not resisting Soveraigns, not [illegible] another; for God and the King, are they contrary? duty and [illegible] justle one another? There is a good remedy for this, which is in [illegible] hand, without breaking any thing. Art thou faint-hearted? go [illegible] *The earth is the Lords*, we go sometimes abroad for lighter occasions [illegible] *to wrath*, to force, and save thy self with God. Is thy heart good [illegible] thing came more seasonably, make a sacrifice unto God of all thou [illegible] thy self. Do two things at once, yea three: Make haste to pay thy [illegible] nature; also for thy last act, do an excellent service to God, and a [illegible] and perpetual profit for thy self. This is the doctrine of the Son of God [illegible] then I say it more briefly than all those who dispute, deny, excuse [illegible] justifie, and plead all along. I say in a word, Although all what the [illegible] faith, were true, which is not, and yet worse than all that: Notwithstanding it is never lawful, for any cause whatsoever, to use force and violence [illegible] ones Soveraign, it is rather a wicked, cursed, and pernicious thing. [illegible] security in their conscience can all those of the League have, to be so [illegible] gainst their true, natural and lawful King; though he should be quite [illegible] one as they set him forth? I say then, that there is no Heaven for them [illegible] are against the King, and dying in such a condition, though there [illegible] nothing else amiss in them; they carry away with them their condemnation [illegible] and for the over-weight, and aggravation of it, they partake of all [illegible] thers, treasons, robberies, scandals, villanies that are done every [illegible] which they are the cause of.

FINIS.